

Remarks

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed May 19, 2004. The fee for addition of new claims is included herewith.

I. Summary of Examiners Rejections

Prior to the Office Action mailed May 19, 2004, claims 1-22 were pending in the Application. In the Office Action mailed May 19, 2004, the Examiner rejected Claims 2, 3, 4, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. 112, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner also rejected Claims 1-7, 11-17, 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cloud et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,634,127, hereafter Cloud). The Examiner also rejected Claims 8-10 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cloud in view of Perkowski (U.S. Patent No. 6,625,581).

II. Summary of Applicants' Amendment

The present Response amends Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 9, 11, 13-16, 18, 19, 21 and 22; cancels claims 2, 7, 10, 12, 17 and 20; and adds new Claims 23-32, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 9, 11, 13-16, 18, 19 and 21-32. Reconsideration of the Application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Applicant reserves the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action mailed May 19, 2004, claims 2, 3, 4, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as invention.

Claims 2 and 12 are canceled by the current response, rendering moot the rejection of these claims.

Claims 3 and 4 as currently amended, no longer depend from claim 2, but instead depend from and include all of the limitations and features of Claim 1, as currently amended. In view of the

amendments to Claim 1, 3 and 4, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 3 and 4 now conform to the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 13 and 14 as currently amended, no longer depend from claim 12, but instead depend from and include all of the limitations and features of Claim 11, as currently amended. In view of the amendments to Claims 11, 13 and 14, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 13 and 14 now conform to the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

IV. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

In the Office Action mailed May 19, 2004, Claims 1-7, 11-17, 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cloud.

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended by the current Response to more clearly define the embodiment of the invention therein. As amended, Claim 1 defines:

1. *(Amended) A collaboration hub for use with a collaboration system for handling messages, comprising:
a transport for receiving messages from participants and sending messages to other participants;
a router that validates each message received at the transport and stores the message for delivery by the transport;
a scheduler that schedules the flow of messages from the transport to the router, and from the router to the transport;
a manager that manages the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub; and,
a repository that stores management data, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.*

Claim 1, as currently amended, defines a collaboration hub comprising a transport for receiving messages from participants and sending messages to other participants, a router that

validates each message and states the message for delivery, a scheduler that schedules the flow of messages from the transport to the router and from the router to the transport, and a manager that manages the flow of messages across the hub. Applicant respectfully submits that these features are not disclosed by the cited references. Particularly, as defined by Claim 1, a participant sends messages to other participants via the hub, and does not send a message to itself. Furthermore, the scheduler schedules the flow of messages between the transport and the router.

Cloud discloses a method and apparatus for implementing a message driven processor (MDP) in a client-server environment, in which the MDP operates as middleware between clients and back-end servers in a large client-server system. Using a workflow Manager and workflow, the complexity of the business function is removed from the client. This enables the client to make simple single requests for services, and to receive simple single replies in return (Col. 11, Lines 34-38). Apparently, a client that sends a request to the back-end servers via the MDP also receives the response, suggesting that in Cloud the same client receives the response, and not, for example, another client.

Applicant respectfully submits that, as described above, the system disclosed by Cloud is a client-server based one, in which the client, or the participant that sends a request is the same participant that receives the response. This is different from the embodiment of the invention defined by claim 1 in which participants send messages to other participants.

Furthermore, Cloud also discloses that a request in the form of a message from a client is decomposed into four different requests for information, as defined by the request profile (Col. 13, Lines 41-45). The individual requests which make up the profile are then processed by the workflow Manager environment, where they are individually packaged for sending to the back-end servers (Col. 13, Lines 47-51). This suggests that each client request in the form of a message is decomposed into four different requests.

However, in the embodiment of the invention defined by claim 1, the router validates each message received and stores the message for delivery, i.e., the message is not decomposed into four different parts, and instead the intended participant receives the entire message.

Furthermore, Cloud discloses that the input manager, client agents, and server agents comprise the MDP, and the input request manager is the primary entry point of request messages

into the MDP (Col. 8, Lines 25-27). MDP 450 comprises a Server Agents & Server Connectivity Layer (430), Workflow Management Layer (420), Workflow Builder (421), Workflow Manager (422) and Client Connectivity Layer & Client Agents (410). Thus it appears that the MDP is not a single component, but is instead a system that contains all of these components. It also appears that the MDP does not manage the flow of messages across the components of the collaboration hub.

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define the role of the manager as one of the components of the collaboration hub, and particularly as that component which manages the flow of messages across the other components of the hub. Applicant respectfully submits that it is different from the role of the MDP disclosed in Cloud.

Furthermore, Cloud apparently discloses that the queue (725) schedules requests between the client agent and the input request manager, and that the same queue does not schedule requests between the input request manager and the server agent.

However, in the embodiment of the invention defined by claim 1, the scheduler schedules the flow of messages from the transport to the router and from the same router to the transport. Applicant respectfully submits that this is different from the queue described in Cloud.

In view of the above comments, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1, as currently amended, is neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of Cloud, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 7, 12 and 17

Claims 2, 7, 12 and 17 are canceled by the current response, rendering moot the rejection of these claims.

Claims 11, 21 and 22

Claims 11, 21 and 22 are amended by the current response to more clearly define the embodiment of the invention therein. Claims 11, 21 and 22 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable in view of the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 11, 21 and 22 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicant reserves the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

Claims 3-6 and 13- 16

Claims 3-6 and 13-16 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim and further in view of the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 3-6 and 13-16 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicant reserves the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

V. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action mailed May 19, 2004, Claims 8-10 and 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cloud, further in view of Perkowski.

Claim 8

The comments provided above with respect to Claim 1 are incorporated herein by reference. Claim 8, as currently amended, depends from and includes all of the limitations and features of Claim 1. Claim 8 also defines the collaboration hub of claim 1 as further comprising business logic plug-ins that provide support for messages of various business protocols among the participants, wherein said business logic plug-ins are plugged in between the scheduler and the router.

Cloud apparently discloses that message based connectivity between one or more client processes and the message driven processor (MDP) is made protocol-transparent to the user by providing client agents which handle differences in network protocol (Col.4, Lines 1-10). The server agents and the client agents can accommodate additional protocols (as shown by element "other"

in Fig. 6). Applicant submits that the client agents and server agents provided to the user, as shown in Fig. 6, appear to be present in the suggested transport of the MDP.

However, in the embodiment of the invention, as defined by claim 8, the business logic plug-ins are plugged in between the scheduler and the router, and are not plugged into the transport.

Perkowski apparently discloses that manufacturers can format their data transactions in any of the many new languages of electronic-business (e.g. cXML, RosettaNet, CBL, BizTalk etc), such that, for example, RosettaNet can be automatically converted into chosen format as suggested by the Examiner.

However, for the reasons given above, Applicant respectfully submits that, even if combined with Perkowski, the combined teachings of Cloud and Perkowski do not teach the embodiment of the invention defined by claim 8, since the combination would not teach the use of business logic plug-ins plugged in between the scheduler and the router.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 8 is neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of, the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 10 and 20

Claims 10 and 20 are canceled by the current response, rendering moot the rejection of these claims.

Claim 9, 18 and 19

Claims 9, 18 and 19 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim and further in view of the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 9, 18 and 19 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view, of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicant reserves the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

VI. Additional Amendments

Claims 23-32

Claims 23-32 have been newly added by the present Response. Applicant respectfully requests that new Claims 23-32 be included in the Application and considered therewith.

VII. Conclusion

The references cited by the Examiner but not relied upon have been reviewed, but are not believed to render the claims unpatentable, either singly or in combination.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the Claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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